

Message Text

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FOR CANDACE COWAN, WHITE HOUSE/ SAO

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: SNAR, NL

SUBJECT: NARCOTIC ADDICT TREATMENT LAWS

REF: STATE 114195

FOLLOWING ARE RESPONSES, KEYED TO QUESTIONS IN REFTEL, ON NARCOTICS TREATMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS. INFO PROVIDED BY ROBERT J. SAMSON, JR., DEPUTY DIRECTOR IN CHIEF OF PUBLIC HEALTH FOR DRUGS, MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE.

A. METHADONE MAINTENANCE IS PERMITTED AND PRACTICED AS LEGITIMATE FORM OF TREATMENT FOR NARCOTIC DRUG ADDICTION IN NETHS. HEROIN MAINTENANCE IS NOT NOW PRACTICED AND PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED IF A DOCTOR OR CLINIC EXPRESSED INTEREST IN PRESCRIBING IT. IN VERY FEW CASES THAT ARISE, INVOLVING DECLARED INTENTION BY DOCTORS TO PRESCRIBE HEROIN FOR HOSPITAL USE AS PAIN KILLER (E. G. IN TERMINAL CANCER CASES), HEALTH MINISTRY OFFICIALS ARE SUCCESSFULLY ENCOURAGING DOCTORS TO PRESCRIBE ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT.

B. THERE ARE NO GON " APPROVED PROGRAMS" AS SUCH FOR EITHER METHADONE OR HEROIN MAINTENANCE. " APPROVAL" FOR METHADONE MAINTENANCE IS INDIRECT WHEREBY HEALTH MINISTRY, EXERCISING CONTROL OVER PHARMACEUTICAL DISTRIBUTION OF METHADONE, IS SATISFIED THAT METHADONE IS BEING ACQUIRED AND UTILIZED FOR

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LEGITIMATE PURPOSES NOT IN CONFLICT WITH THE OPIUM LAW. THUS, THERE IS NO "APPROVED LIST" OF DOCTORS OR CLINICS INVOLVED IN METHADONE

TREATMENT, ONLY FILES OF INDIVIDUAL CASES INVOLVING PRESCRIPTIONS FOR METHADONE. THE PRINCIPAL CENTER OF METHADONE TREATMENT IN NETHS IS JELLINEK CLINIC, KEIZERSGRACHT 674, AMSTERDAM (CHIEF PSYCHIATRIST, DR. PIETER VERRINGS). AS STATED IN "A" ABOVE, NO APPROVAL OF ANY KIND IS LIKELY FOR HEROIN MAINTENANCE.

C. BOTH JELLINEK CLINIC AND PRIVATE DOCTORS MAY LEGALLY TREAT FOREIGN NATIONALS. IN CASE OF JELLINEK CLINIC, APPROXIMATELY HALF OF PATIENTS TREATED ARE USUALLY FOREIGNERS, LARGE NUMBER OF WHOM HAVE BEEN AMCITS.

D. THERE ARE NO SPECIFIC LAWS OR REGULATIONS WHICH CONTROL THE USE OF METHADONE OR HEROIN IN THE TREATMENT OF NARCOTIC ADDICTION. UNDER SECTION 6 OF THE OPIUM LAW, HOWEVER, PREPARATION AND DELIVERY OF OPIATES AND OTHER SUBSTANCES COVERED BY THE LAW ARE PERMITTED FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES PROVIDED REPORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE MEDICINES SUPPLY ACT ARE COMPLIED WITH. IN THIS CONNECTION, REGIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH MINISTRY REQUIRE SUPPLIERS TO REPORT ALL REQUESTS FOR HEROIN AND TO OBTAIN HEALTH MINISTRY APPROVAL IN ADVANCE FOR ALL REQUESTS FOR MORE THAN 500 MG OF HEROIN. NO NOTIFICATION OR AUTHORIZATION IS REQUIRED FOR METHADONE, BUT INVESTIGATIONS WILL BE INITIATED IF PERIODIC INSPECTIONS OF PHARMACY RECORDS BY HEALTH MINISTRY OFFICIALS GIVE RISE TO SUSPICION THAT METHADONE IS NOT BEING SUPPLIED STRICTLY FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES.

E. THERE ARE NO SPECIFIC LAWS OR VISA REGULATIONS REGULATING TRAVEL OF ALIEN NARCOTIC ADDICTS INTO NETHS. TRAVELLERS IN POSSESSION OF NARCOTICS MUST, HOWEVER, BE ABLE TO ESTABLISH TO SATISFACTION OF DUTCH IMMIGRATION AND HEALTH AUTHORITIES THAT SUCH NARCOTICS ARE FOR TREATMENT PURPOSES.

F. THERE IS NO DEFINITION OF "ADDICT" IN DUTCH LAW. BOTH METHADONE AND HEROIN ARE PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES, EXCEPT FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES, UNDER OPIUM LAW; AND, AS STATED ABOVE, TRAVELLERS MUST BE ABLE TO ESTABLISH THAT ANY NARCOTICS IN THEIR POSSESSION ARE FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES. INCIDENTALLY, HEALTH MINISTRY HAS ASKED MFA TO INSTRUCT NETHS EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON TO DISCOURAGE TRAVEL TO NETHS BY PERSONS SEEKING TREATMENT FOR NARCOTIC "ADDICTION". HEALTH MINISTRY HAS NOT, HOWEVER, ASKED THAT DUTCH CONSULAR OFFICERS BE EMPOWERED TO PROHIBIT SUCH TRAVEL.

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